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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

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IN RE APPLICATION OF: :
Kenji MIWA, et al. : EXAMINER: LIN, K
SERIAL NO: 09/158,099 :
RCE FILED: SEPTEMBER 30, 2002 : GROUP ART UNIT: 1725
FOR: METHOD OF REFINEMENT OF
MICROSTRUCTURE OF
METALLIC MATERIALS

AMENDMENT

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20231

SIR:

In response to the Office Action dated October 10, 2002, please amend the above-identified application as follows.

IN THE CLAIMS

A clean copy of the claims incorporating any amendment is shown below.

Please amend Claim 15 as follows:

E/ 15. (Thrice Amended) A method for producing a refined microstructure of a metallic material and shifting a refined material to a periphery of a closed container to yield the refined material concentrated in an end portion of the metallic material, comprising:
subjecting the molten metallic material to a solidification process at temperatures lower than a liquidus of the molten metallic material;